



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
November 1, 2006

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FORMER MAIL HANDLER ADMITS TO POSSESSING OVER 100 GIFT CARDS AND CERTIFICATES STOLEN FROM A MAIL PROCESSING AND DISTRIBUTION CENTER

PHOENIX -- Stephen Lawrence McFadden, age 43, of Peoria, Arizona, pleaded guilty Monday to two counts of Theft of Mail Matter by a Postal Service Employee, in federal district court, before Magistrate Judge Edward C. Voss, in Phoenix, Ariz.

In the course of his guilty plea, McFadden admitted he had been an employee of the U.S. Postal Service and worked at the Phoenix Processing and Distribution Center during the period of May 3, 2005 through April 25, 2006. During this employment, McFadden admitted to stealing numerous pieces of mail from the distribution center including, a letter containing a P.F. Chang's China Bistro gift card addressed to a Henderson, Nevada resident; a letter containing a Sears gift card addressed to a Surprise, Arizona, resident; a letter containing two Target gift cards addressed to two Clarkson, Michigan residents; and another letter containing a Target gift card addressed to a Garden City, Kansas resident. Additionally, on April 25, 2006 the Postal Inspection Service searched McFadden's residence pursuant to a search warrant and found approximately 100 additional stolen gift cards and approximately 20 stolen gift certificates. McFadden admitted during an interview with a Postal Inspector that he had previously used at least three stolen gift cards and had stolen others in order to "augment" his income.

Each conviction for Theft of Mail Matter by a Postal Service Employee carries a maximum penalty of five years, a \$250,000.00 fine or both. In determining an actual sentence, the District Court Judge assigned to the case, Frederick J. Martone, will consult the U.S. Sentencing Guidelines, which provide appropriate sentencing ranges. Judge Martone, however, is not bound by those guidelines in determining a sentence.

Sentencing is set before Judge Martone on Monday, February 26, 2007. McFadden will remain out of custody under pretrial release conditions pending sentencing.

The investigation in this case was conducted by the United States Postal Inspection Service. The prosecution is being handled by Frederick A. Battista, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Phoenix.

CASE NUMBER: CR-06-595-PHX-FJM
RELEASE NUMBER: 2006-227(McFadden)

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